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ABSTRACT

A practicum was designed to reduce disruptive behavior of students riding school buses in a small multicultural community. It was determined that many students were disruptive when riding the school buses, making it difficult for the bus drivers to ensure riders' safety. The practicum implemented a school bus safety education and public awareness program involving students, parents, teachers, drivers and administrators. As part of the program: (1) bus drivers were given inservice training for effective discipline and reviewed safety procedures; (2) teachers and administrators were encouraged to promote better discipline aboard the school buses; (3) students were brought into the process from the beginning; and (4) the school bus discipline code was revised and accepted by all parents and students. Evaluation results showed that the goal of the program was met with achievement of a 66% decrease in disruptive behavior. (Six appendices include the survey and responses on school bus discipline and safety, a statistical breakdown of disruptive incidents during 1993-1994, and the original and revised school bus discipline codes. Contains 34 references. (AP)

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Decreasing Disruptive Behavior Among Students on School Buses Through Comprehensive School Bus Safety Education

by

Jacquelyn Hill

Cluster 60

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A Practicum I Report Presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

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This practicum report was submitted by Jacquelyn Hill under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfuillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved.

Apr. 13, 1995
Date of Final Approval of Report

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ABSTRACT

Decreasing Disruptive Behavior Among Students on School Buses Through Comprehensive School Bus Safety Education. Hill, Jacquelyn , 1995: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. School Psychologist/Multidisciplinary Team/Special Education/Inservice Training/Supervision

The problem dealt with in this practicum setting in a small multicultural, multiethnic community, located near a coastal city in the Southeast, was that many students who rode the school bus were disruptive, making it increasingly difficult for the bus drivers to ensure the safety of the riders. When the drivers tried to discipline the children, they frequently got little or no support from the parents and school administrators. School personnel simply left the drivers to their own resources to handle any discipline problem that might have occurred once the child's bus left the school grounds. More and more children were involved in increasingly serious incidents each year.

The solution to the problem of disruptive behavior aboard school buses chosen by this writer was to implement a school bus safety education and public awareness program involving students, parents, teachers, drivers and administrators. Bus drivers were given in-service training on the basic principles of human relations necessary for effective discipline. They also reviewed safety procedures for operating the buses and for loading and unloading the buses. Teachers were encouraged to become involved in promoting better discipline aboard the school buses. Administrators were urged to be supportive of drivers in their efforts to bring about less disruptive behavior on the buses. Students were brought into the process from the beginning, for it was recognized that they would be more likely to observe safety rules that they themselves help to develop. With input from the administration and the students, the school bus discipline code was revised and accepted by all parents and students.

The goal of this practicum was to decrease disruptive behavior on school buses in the writer's work setting. This goal was met in that instead of the 50% decrease in disruptive behavior projected, there was a 66% decrease.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The work setting for this practicum is a small multicultural, multiethnic community located near a coastal city in the Southeast. The student population is seventy-five percent white and twenty-two percent African-American. Others include those from Japan, China, Mexico, Hawaii, and Latin America. Some families live in apartments and trailers, while others own their own homes. The median income for families in the district is $10,473. Fewer than one-fifth of the children are on free lunch. Ninety-eight percent of the students speak English.

The school district is committed to high standards of formal academics and training. In addition, the programs focus on values, learning, personal health, nutrition, performing arts, and cosmetology. The multiethnic staff of the school strives to provide the best education possible for the children. The staff members bring to the work setting a variety of experiences in science, mathematics, foreign languages, music, reading, physical education, creative writing, computer science, art, home economics, and industrial technology. Nearly one-half of the teachers have a master's degree, with another 14 percent holding a six-year certificate or doctorate degree. The district is unique in its

ability to provide both traditional and non-traditional opportunities for multiethnic and rural-urban children. On all standardized tests, pupils in the district score well above the state average.

The target school is restructuring from a junior high school to a middle school by establishing teams, team planning, and choice of explorations. The student population of the target middle school includes both urban and rural children. There are twenty-nine school bus routes and twenty-nine school buses to serve the 1400 students who attend the target school. Eighty-five percent of the children ride the bus to school.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer's primary role is that of a science teacher and co-disciplinarian for a middle school transportation department's school bus program. She is an expert in classroom teaching, with twenty-four years of public school experience. She holds the master's degree and an education specialist degree, both of which she received from colleges and universities in the Southeast. In addition, she has done extensive study at other institutions of higher education. She is also widely traveled, having been throughout the continental United States and to Canada.

In her work setting, the writer is highly regarded both personally and professionally. She helps classroom teachers plan daily and weekly activities for boys and girls during their advisement time and also assists other teachers with various classroom behavior problems. She is also called upon frequently to conduct in-service workshops at both the local and state level. These workshops are related to student needs, behavior, self-esteem, and skills. In addition, the writer serves as an ARMS representative for the state education

association for the faculty and staff. She was elected as president of the local education association for the 1994-95 school year.

The writer also enjoys high esteem in her community, which makes it easy for her to work with parents and other persons not connected with the school. She is active in church and other social and civic organizations, in some of which she holds the highest elected office. A good communicator, she is often called upon to do public speaking, which she graciously accepts.

The writer has been a school bus driver herself for the past twenty-two years and, as a result, has first-hand knowledge of the challenges posed by children riding the buses.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

One of the great challenges to modern public education is transportation of children in a safe and efficient manner. Accomplishing this task is made all the more difficult when there is disruptive behavior of the children while they are riding the school bus. Recently this problem increased and was a cause of great concern for school administrators as well as parents.

Many children who rode the school bus did not observe minimum safety rules. Moreover, they showed disrespect for the driver, who in many cases was unable to exercise any control over the pupils. Some drivers did not appear to be concerned about how children behaved. They simply focused on operating the machinery, since driving the bus may have been just a way for them to earn some extra money.

When drivers did try to discipline children aboard the bus they drove, they frequently got little or no support from parents and school administrators. It was not unusual for parents to take the side of a disruptive child against the driver. School personnel simply left the drivers to their own resources to handle any discipline problems which may have occurred once the child's bus left the

school grounds. Some persons gave up driving school buses because of the frustration that had built up over the years. Instead of getting better, the situation got worse. More children were involved in more incidents.

There was an increase in disruptive behavior on school buses, and drivers were having difficulty maintaining discipline.

Problem Documentation

The existence of the increase in the problem of disruptive behavior among students riding buses, in the writer's work setting, was evident from the increase in the number of incidence reports as well as in the severity of the offenses reported over a four-year period. Table 1 shows the growth in the number of incidents and number of students involved in disruptive behavior for academic years from 1989-90 to 1993-94.

Table 1. Reports of Disruptive Behavior and Number of Students Involved

Academic Year	No. of Incidents	No. of Students Involved
1989-90	106	72
1990-91	120	80
1991-92	175	120
1992-93	220	150
1993-94	411	236

Source: *Incident reports on file in principal's office*

As the number of incidents grew, so did the severity of the offenses. The number of incidents involving disobeying the driver and talking back to the driver more than tripled over the four-year period. There was also a significant increase in the instances of the use of profanity or namecalling. Table 2 shows the number and kinds of infractions reported during this period.

Table 2. Number and Kinds of Infractions*

Infraction	Number Per Year				
	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94
1. Disobeying driver	50	101	150	175	189
2. Getting out of seat	80	87	110	126	160
3. Pushing or shoving	64	57	120	172	201
4. Yelling or shouting	97	100	150	201	220
5. Using profanity/ namecalling	80	79	161	189	197
6. Talking back to driver	50	101	150	175	210

*More than one infraction included in some reports.

Source: Incident reports in principal's office

Further evidence of the problem could be seen in responses from parents, students, and drivers regarding their perceptions of how safe riding the school bus was and the degree of discipline that is maintained. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix A and the results in Appendix B.

Table 3. Perceptions of School Bus Safety/Discipline

Factor	Parents (N=43)	Students (N=30)	Drivers (N=13)	Total
1. Degree of safety on school buses				
Very safe	5	7	8	20
Somewhat safe	2	5	3	10
Safe	5	2	2	9
Somewhat unsafe	15	10	0	25
Very unsafe	16	6	0	22
2. Degree of discipline on school buses				
Very well-disciplined	4	4	3	11
Somewhat disciplined	5	3	2	10
Disciplined	9	2	6	17
Somewhat undisciplined	15	15	1	31
Very undisciplined	10	6	1	17

Source: Survey - August 1994

Causative Analysis

The problem was multi-faceted, with implications for parents, children, school bus drivers, school administrators, instructors and the community as well. First of all, disruptive behavior among children on school buses was related to discipline problems at home and in school in general and to

expectations of the community in general. Children who had problems behaving in other settings were not likely to behave on school buses. This was particularly understandable when one considers that many children spent up to an hour on the bus each way, and had nothing better to do during this time. However, they had to be helped to understand the importance of good behavior and observing safety rules while they were riding the bus.

Moreover, parents frequently assumed little responsibility for ensuring that their children behaved on the school bus, although they may have been concerned about such behavior in the classroom. They appeared not to see the connection between student behavior and safety, unless their own child was hurt or killed while riding the bus. It was in their minds, or so it seemed, it was the responsibility of the driver to attend to such matters. If a student got barred from riding the school bus, some parents regarded it as little more than an inconvenience. The problem was "solved" by driving the child to school. What was needed was for parents to understand the importance of having pupils behave on the school bus and observe all safety rules. Parents also needed to understand their role in accomplishing this task.

Many bus drivers saw their role as merely operators of the equipment. Some looked at driving the bus as just a way to earn money; they assumed no responsibility for helping children behave more responsibly. The pay was minimal and training beyond the mechanical operation of the bus was nonexistent. To improve the situation, drivers had to be better trained and become more committed to doing the best job possible, which required that they understand and be concerned about the children as individuals.

School administrators were also part of the problem in that many of them did not support bus drivers in enforcing discipline on the bus. Unless something happened on the school grounds, they often showed little concern, thus leaving the bus driver without any reinforcement for controlling disruptive students. Even though there was a disciplinary code that covered behavior on the school bus, it was often not strictly and consistently enforced. Drivers, however, needed to know that the administration was behind them in disciplinary matters. Some teachers seemed to be concerned only with what happened in their classroom or while they were on bus duty. They were only too relieved that the children were "out of their hair." Behavior on the school bus was someone else's business. To alleviate the problem of disruptive behavior on school buses, teachers needed to be convinced that behavior aboard the school bus was just another facet of school discipline in which all school personnel had a stake.

The community, perhaps unwittingly, also contributed to the increase in disruptive behavior on the part of students. This occurred primarily as a result of the seemingly greater tolerance for disorder in society at large, including our growing obsession with violence.

Responses to a survey conducted by telephone in the target district in August 1994 revealed this shared responsibility as well. The findings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Reasons for Poor School Bus Safety/Discipline

Factor	Parents (N=43)	Students (N=30)	Drivers (N=13)	Total
1. Reasons for lack of safety/discipline				
Disruptive behavior by students	20	25	8	53
Inability of drivers to control students	25	26	2	53
No specific penalties	18	16	3	37
Lack of support from school officials	12	6	8	26
Lack of support from parents	10	16	7	33
All offenders not treated the same	5	18	2	25
Lax discipline code	19	16	8	43
Drivers don't care	11	18	0	29
Light punishment for offenders	17	20	9	46
Fear of repercussions from students/parents	8	12	6	26
Drivers not trained to handle children	15	9	5	29

Source: Survey - August 1994

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Disruptive behavior among children on school buses was only one aspect of school disciplinary problems in general, which were a cause for concern among both educators and the public alike. In the classroom,

discipline problems not only interfered with the ability of teachers to teach their classes but were also a source of stress and sometimes fear (Baker, 1985). Both children and parents were concerned about the loss of opportunity to learn and also physical danger (Bauer, 1985). Although disruptive behavior among youth was most evident in the school environment, it had roots in the child's home, the child's social group, the community environment, and the larger social order (Oliva, 1989; Moynihan, 1993/1994; Toby 1993/94) .

According to Toby (1993/1994), school disorder is a predictable consequence of general societal disorder in which there is a reduction in the effectiveness of adult controls over students in all public schools. The tendency towards ineffectiveness is the result of increased separation of the educational process from the family, the development of distinctive student subcultures, increased population mobility which results in high rates of student turnover, and finally the higher age of compulsory school attendance, which all too often results in disengaged students.

According to McManus (1989), students' behavior can be classified into two major categories: (1) discovering and testing rules and the ability of the person in charge to maintain order; and (2) displaying, developing and defending personal identity. The former is particularly prevalent at the beginning of the school year. Dreikurs (1957) suggests that the goals of disruptive behavior, which is rooted in the child's experience in the family, are attention, power, revenge and/or a display of inferiority. Disruptive behavior, according to Balston (1982), reflects children's decisions about how they can most effectively belong to the group.

Disruptive behavior, like non-disruptive behavior, is, according to Glasser (1986), the child's "best attempt at the time to satisfy at least five powerful forces... (or) basic needs" (p. 14). These needs are "(1) to survive and reproduce, (2) to belong and love, (3) to gain power, (4) to be free, and (5) to have fun. All five needs are built into our genetic structure as instructions for how we must attempt to live our lives. All are equally important and must be reasonably realized if we are to fulfill our biological destiny" (p. 23). In addition, control theory, as espoused by Glasser (1986, 1990), holds that:

1. The main goal of life is to stay alive and be in control of life.
2. We develop pictures in our heads that correspond with what we believe will satisfy our built-in needs/wants.
3. We choose total behaviors to try to gain control of people or ourselves.
4. We generally have little difficulty accepting the doing and thinking components of total behavior, but the same does not apply for the feeling component.
5. Because we are less able to accept responsibility for the feeling component of a total behavior, we best express in verb form rather than noun or adjective.
6. Whatever total behavior we choose, it is our best attempt to gain effective control of our lives.
7. We are capable of choosing total behaviors without actually being aware of all that we are actually choosing.
8. Changing an ineffective behavior involves changing all four components of a total behavior, but concentrating on the doing

component works best.

9. Our lives are spent reducing the differences between what we want and what we have.

Dubelle and Hoffman (1984) maintained that bad or disruptive behavior results more from wrong decisions than from deficiencies, and that all students can behave if they want to and decide to. How well children succeed in satisfying these basic needs depends to some extent on their beliefs, expectations and attitudes (McManus, 1989). Although children's behavior is influenced by factors outside the school, how student motivations are manifest at school may be affected by the general school climate, culture of the school and the administrators, and teachers (Owens, 1987).

The problem of disruptive behavior may be exacerbated by the fact that disciplinary measures are often challenged or disregarded by defiant or recalcitrant children whose parents are inclined to support their children. As a result, teachers and others responsible for disciplining children may be reluctant to do so. In an effort to avoid the conflict of wills that often accompanies disciplinary action, they may be more willing to overlook disruptive behavior and to disregard children who cause problems (Froyen, 1993).

On school buses, student behavior may be influenced by a number of other factors as well. According to Farmer (1984), pupil transportation programs in many communities suffer because of increased demands for extended service from community pressure groups, reductions in budgets, driver militancy, a reduction in the purchasing power of the tax dollar and rapid turnover among school bus drivers. These conditions put the school

transportation program at risk of failure to provide safe passage of children. All too often drivers are in the job for the money. They do not know or care about their role in pupil safety, beyond the mechanical operation of the bus itself. Because of limited budgets, districts frequently do not provide adequate training for drivers, particularly in the area of human relationship and child development (Button,1988).

Moreover, parents do not take as active a role as they should in training their children to observe safety procedures while being transported on the school bus (Stewart,1989). In some school districts, many children spend up to an hour or more riding school buses each day. The longer children spend on the bus, the greater the challenge for maintaining discipline.

All of these factors considered together mitigate against the drivers being able to enforce discipline aboard school buses. Therefore, any solution to the problem must take into account the disruptive child, his/her parents and home environment, the knowledge/skill of the driver, support from school personnel, and the attitudes of society in general.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The goal of this practicum was to decrease disruptive behavior on school buses in the writer's work setting. Children would be involved in fewer incidences of disruptive behavior. Bus drivers would be more effective in disciplining their riders, and would receive reinforcement from school personnel.

Expected Outcomes

It was expected that by the end of the 12-week practicum period:

1. Eight of the 12 routes in the experimental group would report fewer instances of disruptive behavior during the practicum period than during the same period in the previous year.
2. No more than 10 of the 43 parents surveyed would indicate that school buses are somewhat unsafe or very unsafe.
3. No more than 10 of the 43 parents surveyed would indicate that the students aboard school buses are somewhat undisciplined or very undisciplined.

4. No more than 5 of the 30 students surveyed would indicate that school buses are somewhat unsafe or very unsafe.
5. No more than 10 of the 30 students surveyed would indicate that the students aboard school buses are somewhat undisciplined or very undisciplined.
6. None of the 13 school bus drivers surveyed would indicate that the students aboard school buses are somewhat undisciplined or very undisciplined.

Measurement of Outcomes

Outcomes for this practicum were measured by comparing the number and kinds of infractions occurring among the group of bus riders participating in practicum activities over a 12-week period with the number and kinds of infractions reported during a comparable period the previous year. This group consisted of 13 of the 29 school buses operated for the writer's school, with the same drivers as in the previous year.

In addition, the survey administered before the practicum began was readministered after the practicum ended to same respondents to determine any changes in perceptions about safety on school buses and discipline on school buseswhich might have occurred during the interim. The responses from parents, students and drivers who responded to Questions 1 and 2 on the pre-intervention survey were compared with their responses to the same questions after the intervention was completed.

No attempt was made to measure the school bus drivers' perception of improvement in their own ability to maintain discipline among the school bus riders as a result of the insservice training they received, since this was not

stated as an expected outcome.

The measures selected seemed most appropriate to evaluate the effects of the intervention program on behavior of the students who ride school buses.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

Evidence has shown that there is an increase in disruptive behavior on the part of students on school buses. To meliorate the problem requires consideration of the same principles which are effective in handling disruptive behavior in the classroom.

Stoner and Cerminara (1991) argued that a student code system must be developed if discipline is to be maintained in the 1990s. A student code is more than a set of rules for processing student discipline problems. It is also the school's primary tool for communicating to students the values of the institution and assuring the public that the school can handle problems responsibly and appropriately internally. In establishing the code, administrators are cautioned not to regard the code as more important than the student, since students tend to respect and cooperate with a system that gives them dignity. Dubelle and Hoffman (1984) suggested six "rules about rules:"

1. Rules are more cheerfully and willingly followed when all members of the (group) have a voice in making them.
2. A good rule must be understood by all parties and stated clearly.
3. A good rule must be reasonable.

4. A good rule should be attached to a specific and known consequence that will occur when it is broken.
5. A good rule can deteriorate into no rule if teachers are inconsistent in their attitude toward it.
6. When other, more important activities come up that compete with compliance with the rule, the rule should be waived if arrangements are made to swap duties or comply with the rule at a different time. (pp. 87-88)

Rules and consequences should be published in a parent/student handbook. To ensure that students are thoroughly familiar with the handbook, time should be allowed for students to review the book, and opportunities should be provided for them to express any concerns they have (Scola, 1992).

Two recognized approaches to student management are conduct management and covenant management. Conduct management is essentially an assertive management style such as espoused by Canter (1979), York et al (1982), and Rosemond (1981, 1989). The assertive teacher, according to Canter (1979, p. 34), assumes a position characterized by the following stances:

1. I will not allow any student to stop me from teaching for any reason.
2. I will not allow any student to stop another student from learning for any reason.
3. I will not permit students to engage in behavior that is not in their best interests and the best interests of others.
4. Whenever students choose to behave appropriately, they will be recognized, supported, and rewarded for that behavior.

In contrast to conduct management, covenant management is an applied

version of control theory, which emphasizes the teacher's role in helping students take effective control of their lives.

Glasser (1977) proposed an eight-step problem-solving strategy to deal with disciplinary problems:

1. Get involved with the student.
2. Deal with the student's present behavior.
3. Get the student to make a value judgment about the behavior.
4. Help the student develop a plan to change the behavior.
5. Get a commitment from the student to stick to the plan.
6. If the student fails to keep the plan, do not ask for or accept any excuses.
7. Do not punish or criticize the student for broken plans, but do not interfere with reasonable consequences.
8. Never give up; return to Step 3 and start again.

Glasser (1969) also recommended the use of class meetings as a means to helping students gain or regain control of their lives. Class meetings are an avenue by which students are afforded the opportunity to entertain issues and think about multi-dimensional problems. They can pose their own questions, examine each other's answers, gain new insights and mediate their own disputes (Koch, 1988). The three types of class meetings are social problem-solving meetings, open-ended meetings, and educational-diagnostic meetings, of which the first two are the most appropriate for dealing with disciplinary problems.

Froyen (1993) cautioned that in class meetings students should not be given free rein and permitted to take the discussion in any direction they wish. Instead, class meetings should be structured, though flexible. A three-step

procedure for conducting the meeting is recommended:

1. Define: Introduce the topic.
2. Personalize: Make connections between personal experience and the topic.
3. Challenge: Do something about the problem.

Karlin and Berger (1992) outlined a number of basic methods for working with children with problems. Those which seem applicable to disruptive children on school buses are summarized below:

1. Develop rapport with the child.
2. Show children love and affection.
3. Treat every child fairly and equally.
4. Understand children's exuberance and misbehavior.
5. Build a success pattern with every child.
6. Try to understand the child's basic problems.
7. Listen carefully to children.
8. Work on solutions to problems together.
9. Seek other aid if necessary.
10. Enlist the cooperation of parents.

Discipline should involve the entire school: administrators, teachers, and students. MacNaughton and Johns (1991) suggested that a schoolwide management and discipline plan should be characterized by the following:

1. Well-developed rules and regulations.
2. An organized plan for enforcing school policy
3. Emphasis on positive student actions
4. Parental and community involvement.

In addition to the principles which apply to discipline in general, other

matters specifically related to school buses must be taken into consideration, including the recruitment, hiring, training and retention of drivers.

In "The Driving Force," Farmer (1989) suggested that getting school bus drivers to give their best is vital to the school transportation program. One key element in achieving this goal is to provide administrative support in handling discipline problems which occur on the bus. While drivers often need to discipline students, in some cases they might not be able to handle the situation. Having a district policy dictating who has responsibility for resolving discipline problems can be invaluable to drivers as well as students. This can best be accomplished when drivers are trained to be aware of psychological, physiological, and emotional development of children, as well as their behavior patterns and reactions to conditions around them (Farmer, 1988). Not only must bus drivers be better trained, but parents and teachers must also be trained to understand their role in promoting pupil safety aboard buses (Button 1988). The public must also be alerted through media campaigns, such as radio announcements, bumper stickers, school newsletters, newspaper articles and speakers at service club programs (Button, 1988).

An awareness of societal influences on student behavior, adequate staffing, the establishment of a student discipline code, uniform administration of the discipline code, and administrative support for handling disruption on school buses can lead to a decrease in the incidence of disruptive behavior on school buses, particularly when these are accompanied by salary and fringe benefits sufficient to attract, employ and retain the best qualified applicants. Conditions should be such that people who drive school buses should want the job (Ponessa, 1987).

The literature contained discussion of solutions which ranged to stricter

enforcement of existing discipline codes to better salary and fringe benefits packages for drivers. Some of these were not feasible for the writer to undertake at any time, while others would have required greater control by the writer of conditions aboard the school buses. Each solution discussed from the literature is evaluated below.

Development and uniform enforcement of a student discipline code, with student input, seemed to be both sound and feasible for the writer's work setting. Students everywhere are more likely to feel ownership of and cooperate with the implementation of discipline code when they have some input into the development of it. Ensuring that the rule does not take priority over the student is sound psychology in all walks of life. Publishing and discussing the discipline code ensured that it is accessible to both parents and students and that they were familiar with the consequences of violating the rules.

Covenant management was more feasible for this practicum, because it put the onus of compliance on the student even when the disciplinarian, whether it was the bus driver or school personnel, was not present. The assertive management style would have required more control by the disciplinarian. The one aspect of the assertive management style that did work in the writer's work setting was recognition and support for appropriate behavior.

Glasser's eight-step problem-solving strategy seemed feasible for both driver and school personnel handling of discipline problems. Glasser's concept of class meetings also seemed appropriate, as it could be adapted for bus riders. Riders could express their concerns about disruptive behavior and issues related to it and come up with an acceptable discipline code.

Parental involvement in maintaining discipline aboard school buses was essential because if children knew that parents disapproved of disruptive behavior, they were less likely to engage in it. Also parents needed to take an active role in teaching children about safety, not just in disapproving inappropriate behavior.

Involving all school personnel in teaching about school bus safety and promoting uniform enforcement of rules sent a clear message to students that disruptive behavior would not be tolerated. Also bus drivers felt more secure in their handling of discipline problems when they knew that they were supported by school personnel.

Drivers who understood the psychological, physiological and emotional development of children were better able to put specific incidents in perspective. They were more realistic in their expectations about student conduct at different age levels.

Several solutions were suggested in response to a survey conducted by telephone to randomly selected parents, students and drivers in the target district. These are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Suggestions for Improving School Bus Safety/Discipline

Factor	Parents (N=43)	Students (N=30)	Drivers (N=13)	Total
Stricter rules	35	26	9	70
Harsher punishment	30	15	7	52
Expelling disruptive students	38	10	4	52
Support from parents	20	22	13	55
Support from school	26	24	13	63
Better trained drivers	23	16	4	43
Higher pay for drivers	10	6	5	21
Student involvement	15	23	9	47

Source: Survey: August 1994

The solutions which were not feasible for the writer to implement were district policy designating specific areas of responsibility for resolving discipline problems, and increased salaries and fringe benefits for drivers. These depended not only on district policy, but also on district resources. At a time when school districts everywhere were strapped for cash, it did not seem reasonable that the writer could effect any changes in this area, particularly over a twelve-week period.

Many of the suggestions from the survey were feasible, but others did not reflect an awareness of current research in the area of discipline. These included stricter rules and harsher punishment.

Description of Selected Solution

The writer elected to implement the following strategies, with school-level approval, to bring about a decrease in disruptive behavior on school buses:

1. A public awareness program related to school bus safety;
2. In-service training for school bus drivers dealing with basic information about the psychological, physiological, and emotional development of children;
3. Refinement of the discipline code with student input;
4. Involvement of parents and teachers in promoting safety aboard school buses;
5. Uniform enforcement of the discipline code, with support from school administrators; and
6. Recognition/reward for appropriate behavior.

Report of Action Taken

This section is a report of the action taken to implement each of the strategies selected to bring about a decrease in disruptive behavior on school buses.

Selection of Experimental and Control Groups

Prior to the opening of school, the writer requested permission from the principal to examine incidence reports involving infractions on school buses for the previous year. There were a total of 29 bus routes for the current year, compared with only 22 for the previous year.

The writer's original plan called for separating incidents according to driver and route. This proved to be unwieldy because of the numerous different children involved. The writer instead decided to use the monthly breakdown of number and kind of incidents reported to the school principal.

Only thirteen of the twenty-nine routes had the same drivers the previous year as for the current year. These were chosen to be invited to participate in the practicum activities, particularly the in-service training. All of those invited agreed to participate. The statistics for this group were used to measure the success of the practicum activities.

Also the administration wanted all children and their parents to receive information on bus safety, not just the ones who rode the thirteen participating buses. Therefore, information was sent home to all parents and all children were involved in practicum activities at school, such as the rap contest. However, only the thirteen drivers for the current year who had driven the previous year participated in the in-service training, and only the students who rode the buses driven by these persons were included in the pilot test.

Public Awareness Program

Prior to school opening, the writer worked with the district transportation school bus division to identify materials appropriate for a safety campaign. There were ample pamphlets and booklets available, but the writer decided to conduct a poster contest for the general community and a bumper sticker contest for students.

During the first week of school, a public awareness campaign related to school bus safety was launched. The week was designated as Bus Safety Week to stimulate parents, students and the general public to think about the need for everybody to be involved in school bus safety. The campaign included

the following:

a. Distribution of booklet "Join the School Bus Safety Team" (S.C. State Department of Education, 1975) to all students and parents;

b. Distribution of pamphlets on pedestrian and school bus safety for parents and children (S.C. Department of Highways and Public Transportation, 1989);

c. Distribution of bumper stickers to participating bus drivers;

d. Broadcasts on local radio stations regarding school bus safety;

e. Inclusion of school bus safety information in the bulletins of local churches;

f. Displaying bus safety-related information in local businesses; and

g. Sponsoring a community-wide poster contest on the theme "IT'S PHAT (cool) TO BE GOOD ON THE BUS."

During the fifth week of school a bus safety newsletter, "Spectacular News," was developed and distributed to students and parents.(A copy of the first newsletter is included in Appendix D).

In-service training for school bus drivers

Before school opened, bus drivers who had driven the previous year and were scheduled to drive for the current year were interviewed by the writer to determine their interest and willingness to participate in in-service workshops to improve their ability to promote safety and to handle discipline effectively on the school bus. All thirteen drivers invited agreed to participate. During this initial meeting, the writer and the drivers discussed the importance of human relations in maintaining discipline aboard school buses. The writer got input from the drivers on what kind of information they needed to enable them to do their jobs more effectively. Most of them agreed that they did not understand the

development and behavior of children at different ages as well as they should or as well as they wanted to.

Three in-service workshops were held for participating bus drivers. The workshops dealt with basic information bus operating procedures and about the psychological, physiological, and emotional development of children.

The first workshop included an overview of bus operation and a behind-the-wheel examination on proper behavior on the bus.

The second and third workshops were conducted by a consultant from a nearby university. The first of these focused on driver confidence and self-esteem and the second on patience and responsibility of school bus drivers. A video on tips for avoiding school bus wrecks was also shown. Instructions for properly loading and unloading school buses were also given.

Involvement of Parents and Teachers

In addition to drivers and administrators, this practicum also involved teachers and parents in promoting safety aboard school buses. A schoolwide assembly was held with transportation managers. Parents and teachers were invited to attend with the students. Safety procedures and proper conduct on the buses were discussed. Previously parents had received pamphlets telling them how they and their children could promote safety aboard the buses and on the ground as pedestrians. In addition, during faculty meetings, presentations were made on the relationship of discipline in general to discipline on school buses and the role teachers have in enforcing discipline codes and teaching students about safety and responsibility.

Presentations were made to the PTA on three separate occasions concerning the materials that had been sent home. The importance of parents in promoting safety on school buses was emphasized.

Teachers and parents also volunteered to keep a tally of disciplinary problems they observed on the school buses. To facilitate this process, they were given a checklist to record observed offenses. A copy of this checklist is included in Appendix E.

Involvement of Students

Students were also actively recruited and encouraged to develop strategies for promoting school bus safety. A schoolwide assembly was held during which students staged a rap contest dealing with the subject of school bus safety. The contest was videotaped for playback during advisement. School level bumper sticker contests were also held. The winning slogan was printed and distributed to the student body.

Refinement of the Discipline Code

The writer met with the student council officers to discuss the school bus discipline code and to invite them to make any suggestions they had for changes. They were encouraged to be honest about their feelings concerning school bus safety and discipline. After discussing the issue in their own meetings with the remainder of the student body, they recommended some revisions, which surprisingly coincided with the changes which had been recommended by the administration but which had not been communicated to students. The major changes were to make the punishment stricter and to ensure that parents and students signed the letter informing them of the discipline code. The stricter punishment was agreed upon by both the students and the administrator, although the writer did not recommend this change.

When the suggested changes were decided upon, a meeting was held with the riders of the thirteen buses participating in the practicum to enlist their agreement to abide by the code. The code was then pilot-tested for two weeks.

There were no protests against the code, and it was therefore adopted. Parents and students schoolwide agreed to abide by it. A copy of the original code is included in Appendix F and a copy of the revised code in Appendix G.

Uniform Enforcement of the Discipline Code

Once the discipline code was revised and accepted by the administration, it was uniformly enforced. All students who violated the code were handled according to the provisions of the code, regardless of who they were. That eliminated harsher punishment for some and more laxed punishment for others for the same offense. Enforcement of the code had the full support of school administrators. It was clearly understood by bus drivers, students, and parents, that when a driver had students to violate the discipline code while they were on the bus, they would be disciplined, and the administration would support all action that was within the boundaries of the discipline code.

Recognition/rewards for Appropriate Behavior

One of the key elements in the practicum was that of providing recognition and rewards for appropriate behavior on the school buses. Not only did the winners of the poster contests, the rap contest, and the bumper sticker contest receive rewards for their efforts, but the students who rode the buses with the fewest incidents of disruptive behavior during the practicum period were rewarded as well. The winners of the rap contest and the bumper sticker contest received a gift certificate to a local amusement park.

The best disciplined buses received bus stickers that read, "Be Safe and Be a Winner." Award ribbons were also presented to the top three buses. An ice cream party was held in the cafeteria for those students riding the winning buses. Prizes were donated by a number of local businesses and the writer.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The problem dealt with in this practicum setting in a small multicultural, multiethnic community located near a coastal city in the Southeast was that many students who rode the school bus were disruptive, making it increasingly difficult for the bus drivers to ensure the safety of the riders. When the drivers tried to discipline the children, they frequently got little or no support from the parents and school administrators. It was not unusual for parents to take the side of a disruptive child against the driver. School personnel simply left the drivers to their own resources to handle any discipline problem that might have occurred once the child's bus left the school grounds. Some persons gave up driving school buses altogether because of the frustrations that had built up over the years from trying to deal with disruptive children and keep the bus safe at the same time. More and more children were involved in incidents each year. The incidents also got more serious with each passing year.

The solution to the problem of disruptive behavior aboard school buses chosen by this writer was to implement a school bus safety education and public awareness program involving students, parents, teachers, drivers and administrators. Bus drivers were given in-service training on the basic principles of human relations necessary for effective discipline. They also

reviewed safety procedures for operating the buses and for loading and unloading the buses. Teachers were encouraged to become involved in promoting better discipline aboard the school buses, since discipline on the buses was merely and extension of school discipline in general. Administrators were urged to be supportive of drivers in their efforts to bring about less disruptive behavior on the buses.

Students were brought into the process from the beginning, for it was recognized that they would be more likely to observe safety rules that they themselves help to develop. With input from the administration and the students, the school bus discipline code was revised. Once the code was finalized, it was accepted by all parents and students.

The goal of this practicum was to decrease disruptive behavior on school buses in the writer's work setting. The writer projected that at the end of the three-month implementation period, children would be involved in fewer incidences of disruptive behavior, and bus drivers would be more effective in disciplining their riders, and would receive reinforcement from school personnel. A 50% decrease in the number and kind of infractions over a three month period was the standard of achievement that was projected as evidence of success.

The writer projected six expected outcomes of the practicum activities. The level of attainment of each is discussed below. The writer notes that instead of 12 routes included in the practicum group, there were 13 routes because there were 13 current drivers who had driven the same route the previous year.

Outcome 1. Eight (66%) of the 12 routes in the experimental group will report fewer instances of disruptive behavior during the practicum period than during the same period in the previous year.

During the 3-month implementation period, September through November 1994, there was a total of 139 incidents of disruptive behavior reported among students aboard school buses. During the same period during the previous year, September through November 1993, there was a total of 411 incidents reported. This represents a decrease of approximately 67%. Therefore, the expected outcome was confirmed. The results are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Breakdown of Infractions for First Three Months for 1993-94 and 1994-95

Infraction	Month							
	1		2		3		Total	
	'93-'94	'94-'95	'93-'94	'94-'95	'93-'94	'94-'95	'93-'94	'94-'95
1. Disobeying driver	23	8	24	6	23	0	70	14
2. Getting out of seat	16	10	17	9	17	15	50	34
3. Pushing or shoving	23	15	24	14	23	9	70	38
4. Yelling or shouting	25	16	27	15	26	5	78	36
5. Using profanity/ namecalling	23	6	25	2	25	0	73	8
6. Talking back to driver	24	6	24	3	22	0	70	9
Totals	134	61	141	49	136	29	411	139

Source: *Incident Reports in Principal's Office*

From the breakdown shown in Table 6, it can be seen that both the number and the kind of incidents which occurred during the practicum period declined from what was reported during the previous year. Moreover, these numbers declined month by month over the three-month practicum period for all incidents except incidents involving the student getting out of his or her seat. Incidences of disobeying the driver, using profanity or namecalling, and talking back to the driver declined to zero during this time. Pushing or shoving remained about the same throughout the observed period. Yelling or shouting declined only slightly during the second month, but dropped sharply by the third month.

Outcome 2. No more than 10 of the 43 parents surveyed will indicate that school buses are somewhat unsafe or very unsafe.

Responses from a survey conducted before the practicum interventions were implemented indicated that 31 of the 43 parents surveyed felt that the school bus was somewhat unsafe or very unsafe. When the same parents were surveyed at the end of the practicum period, only eight indicated that school buses were somewhat unsafe or very unsafe. Thirty-five indicated the buses were safe to very safe. The results are shown in the table below.

Table 7. Parents' Perceptions of Safety on School Buses

Degree of safety	1993-94 (N = 43)	1994-95 (N = 43)
Very safe	5	15
Somewhat safe	2	10
Safe	5	10
Somewhat unsafe	15	5
Very unsafe	16	3

Source: *Survey Administered in August 1994 and in November 1994*

Outcome 3. No more than 10 of the 43 parents surveyed will indicate that the students aboard school buses are somewhat undisciplined or very undisciplined.

Responses received on a pre-practicum survey indicated that 24 of the 43 parents responding felt that the school buses were somewhat undisciplined or very undisciplined. By contrast, responses to the post-practicum survey of the same parents indicated that only 3 of the 43 felt that the school buses were somewhat undisciplined, and none of the parents felt that the buses were very undisciplined, as indicated in the table below.

Table 8. Parents' Perception of Discipline on School Buses

Degree of Discipline	1993-94 (N = 43)	1994-95 (N = 43)
Very well-disciplined	4	8
Somewhat disciplined	5	15
Disciplined	9	17
Somewhat undisciplined	15	3
Very undisciplined	10	0

Source: *Survey Administered in August 1994 and in November 1994*

Outcome 4.No more than 5 of the 30 students surveyed will indicate that school buses are somewhat unsafe or very unsafe.

Approximately half of the students who were surveyed before the practicum activities were implemented indicated that school buses were somewhat unsafe or very unsafe. After the interventions, no students felt the buses were somewhat unsafe or very unsafe.

Table 9. Students' Perceptions of Safety on School Buses

Degree of safety	1993-94	1994-95
Very safe	7	12
Somewhat safe	5	8
Safe	2	10
Somewhat unsafe	10	0
Very unsafe	6	0

Source: *Survey Administered in August 1994 and in November 1994*

Outcome 5. No more than 10 of the 30 students surveyed will indicate that the students aboard school buses are somewhat undisciplined or very undisciplined.

As in the case of safety aboard school buses, a majority of students surveyed before the practicum activities were implemented indicated that they felt the buses were either somewhat undisciplined or very undisciplined. At the end of the practicum period, no students responded that the buses were somewhat undisciplined or very undisciplined. The breakdown of student responses to this item appear below.

Table 10. Students' Perception of Discipline on School Buses

Degree of Discipline	1993-94	1994-95
Very well-disciplined	4	10
Somewhat disciplined	3	15
Disciplined	2	4
Somewhat undisciplined	15	1
Very undisciplined	6	0

Source: *Survey Administered in August 1994 and in November 1994*

Outcome 6. None of the 13 school bus drivers surveyed will indicate that the students aboard school buses are somewhat undisciplined or very undisciplined.

It is interesting to note that in spite of the number of incidents of disruptive behavior on the school buses recorded in the principal's office, drivers generally tended to indicate that the school buses were disciplined to very well-disciplined. In the pre-practicum survey of bus drivers' perception of discipline aboard school buses, only 1 out of 13 indicated that the buses were somewhat undisciplined, and only 1 indicated that the buses were very undisciplined. This was in contrast to the perceptions of both students and parents, wherein over half of both the latter groups indicated a problem in discipline aboard school buses. The drivers' responses may have been indicative of the fact that the drivers felt that if they said there was a lack of discipline, it would have reflected negatively on them.

Table 11. Drivers' Perception of Discipline on School Buses

Degree of Discipline	1993-94	1994-95
Very well-disciplined	3	5
Somewhat disciplined	2	3
Disciplined	6	5
Somewhat undisciplined	1	0
Very undisciplined	1	0

Source: *Survey Administered in August 1994 and in November 1994*

Discussion

From the results described above, it can be concluded that providing in-service training for drivers, conducting a public awareness campaign, and involving students, parents, teachers and administrators in promoting school bus safety can produce positive results. All of the anticipated outcomes for the practicum were confirmed.

The practicum findings confirm some of the theories in the literature. Among these are the following.

1. Covenant management of student behavior is an effective means of helping students take effective control of their own lives (Glasser, 1977). When students are involved with the solution to a problem affecting them, they assume ownership of the solution and are much more likely to abide by the terms and conditions set forth than they would be if they had not been involved. Parents and students were required to sign the school bus discipline code, indicating that they had received it and also that they

accepted and would abide by it.

2. Rules and consequences should be published in a parent/student handbook and steps taken to ensure that students understand them and have the opportunity to express any concerns they have about the code (Scola, 1992). This was handled through student assemblies and through the student council. As a result, students took responsibility for their behavior on the school bus. They also changed their perceptions of safety and discipline aboard the buses.
3. A discipline code is a tool for communicating to students the values of the school and for assuring the public that the school can handle the problems responsibly and appropriately internally (Stoner & Cerminara, 1991). In this instance, the practicum was very instrumental in sending out a strong, clear message that the school--from the administrators down to the students--would not tolerate continued disruptive behavior aboard the school buses.

Recommendations

The writer recommends the following with respect to decreasing disruptive behavior aboard school buses:

1. That all school bus drivers be required to participate in in-service training regarding the development and behavior of children at different levels;
2. That all teachers take a more active role in all aspects of school discipline, including discipline aboard school buses;
3. That parents, students, drivers, teachers, administrators and the public continue to function as a team in reducing disruptive behavior aboard school buses; and

4. That public awareness campaigns be ongoing throughout the year and not just at the beginning of school.

Dissemination

The writer's plan for dissemination includes the following:

1. Making presentations at faculty meetings, PTA meetings, student assemblies, and meetings of civic organizations;
2. Sharing with other school transportation personnel in other school districts during state professional meetings; and
3. Possibly publishing an article in a school related journal.

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APPENDIX A

TELEPHONE SURVEY ON SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE AND SAFETY

TELEPHONE SURVEY ON SCHOOL BUS

DISCIPLINE AND SAFETY

Hello. My name is _____

I am conducting a survey to get input from a cross segment of persons like yourself regarding safety and discipline on school buses. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. Please answer each of the following questions. Do not include references to the bus itself. There are no right and wrong answers.

1. How safe do you think riding the school bus is in this district?
2. If you think riding the school bus is unsafe, please list the two most important reasons you think it is not.
3. How well-disciplined are students aboard school buses?
4. Who is responsible for ensuring safety aboard school buses?
5. Who is responsible for ensuring discipline aboard school buses?
6. What are at least two ways safety and discipline can be improved?
7. Are you a student, a parent, or a school bus driver?

Thank you for your time and assistance in completing this survey.

APPENDIX B

SURVEY RESPONSES

Responses to Survey on School Bus Safety/Discipline

Factor	Parents (N=43)	Students (N=30)	Drivers (N=13)	Total
1. Degree of safety on school buses				
Very safe	5	7	8	20
Somewhat safe	2	5	3	10
Safe	5	2	2	9
Somewhat unsafe	15	10	0	25
Very unsafe	16	6	0	22
2. Degree of discipline on school buses				
Very well-disciplined	4	4	3	11
Somewhat disciplined	5	3	2	10
Disciplined	9	2	6	17
Somewhat undisciplined	15	15	1	31
Very undisciplined	10	6	1	17
3. Reasons for lack of safety/discipline				
Disruptive behavior by students	20	25	8	53
Inability of drivers to control students	25	26	2	53
No specific penalties	18	16	3	37
Lack of support from school officials	12	6	8	26
Lack of support from parents	10	16	7	33

Factor	Parents (N=43)	Students (N=30)	Drivers (N=13)	Total
All offenders not treated the same	5	18	2	25
Lax discipline code	19	16	8	43
Drivers don't care	11	18	0	29
Light punishment for offenders	17	20	9	46
Fear of repercussions from students/parents	8	12	6	26
Drivers not trained to handle children	15	9	5	29
5. Who is responsible for safety/discipline				
Driver	32	18	8	58
Parents	15	10	5	30
School	25	22	9	56
Students	16	21	6	43

Factor	Parents (N=43)	Students (N=30)	Drivers (N=13)	Total
5. Suggestions for improvement				
Stricter rules	35	26	9	70
Harsher punishment	30	15	7	52
Expelling disruptive students	38	10	4	52
Support from parents	20	22	13	55
Support from school	26	24	13	63
Better trained drivers	23	16	4	43
Higher pay for drivers	10	6	5	21
Student involvement	15	23	9	47

APPENDIX C

BREAKDOWN OF INFRACTIONS FOR 1993-94 BY MONTHS

Breakdown of Infractions by Month for 1993-94

Infraction	Month 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
1. Disobeying driver	23	24	23	18	20	17	22	19	23	189
2. Getting out of seat	16	17	17	18	16	18	17	20	21	160
3. Pushing or shoving	23	24	23	27	20	26	20	18	20	201
4. Yelling or shouting	25	27	26	25	25	23	24	24	21	220
5. Using profanity/ namecalling	23	25	25	22	17	17	22	24	22	197
6. Talking back to driver	24	24	22	26	24	25	20	22	23	210
Totals	134	141	136	136	122	126	125	127	130	1177

Source: Incident reports in principal's office

APPENDIX D

NEWSLETTER

Spectacular News

BUS SAFETY BUSINESS

BUS SAFETY WEEK

DuBose Middle School held a Bus Safety Week on September 5-9, 1994. Bumper stickers were given, as well as pamphlets passed out to the students to remind them of expected bus behaviors. A Z-93 DJ, Ronald Pinckney came to speak and made announcements over the local radio station. A Poster Contest was held to help celebrate Bus Safety Week.

BUS RULES

1. No Loud Talking
2. No Smoking
3. No Eating /Drinking
4. No Gum Chewing/Candy
5. No Profanity
6. No standing When bus is in Motion
7. No Name Calling
8. No Sex Acts of any kind
9. Keep every part of your body inside windows and keep to yourself
10. Abide by all rules and have a great year

A BIG THANK YOU TO SPEAKERS: SMALLS, PRYOR AND FLOWERS.

Consultant Dr. Don Smalls, Clara Pryor and Bob Flowers gave very informative talks during separate assemblies of the entire student body and proper bus conduct. They also gave information to the drivers concerning how to behave on buses and safety procedures to follow when driving a bus. All of these speakers were educational and informative.

POSTER CONTEST

There will be a poster contest held on the topic"IT'S PHAT TO BE GOOD ON THE BUS." Area business partners: Sticky Fingers, Alexanders Station, Burger King, McDonalds, Oscars, Navy Bridge and Bill's Barbecue sponsored prizes of free meals, desserts and gift certificates for the winning posters. These posters were then put on display at area businesses to emphasize the need for bus safety.

"Home of the Wildcat"

APPENDIX E

ORIGINAL SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE CODE

Dear Parents:

In the operation of school buses, our first concern is safety. Good behavior of the students transported is necessary for safe operations.

Good discipline on school buses requires the cooperation of both the students and their parents. Therefore, I earnestly request that you remind your child, or children, of the importance of following the established rules of behavior while on the bus and to heed the instructions of the bus driver.

The general procedure adopted by our schools to deal with misconduct on the buses is as follows:

1. First Offense: A Warning and/or punishment.
2. Second Offense: A letter to parents and/or punishment.
3. Third Offense: One day suspension
4. Fourth Offense: Two days suspension
5. Fifth Offense: One week from bus.

The bus privileges of a student may be suspended, of course, on a first or second offense when in the judgment of school officials the misconduct is serious enough to justify such action.

Each case of reported misconduct will be appropriately investigated before punishment is administered. The principal of the school in which the child is enrolled is responsible for the punishment.

Please feel free to come to the school or to telephone the Principal should you have any questions regarding the foregoing.

Sincerely yours,

APPENDIX F

REVISED SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE CODE

Dear Parents:

In the operation of school buses, our first concern is safety. Good behavior of the students transported is necessary for safe operations.

Good discipline on school buses requires the cooperation of both the students and their parents. Therefore, I earnestly request that you remind your child, or children, of the importance of following the established rules of behavior while on the bus and to heed the instructions of the bus driver.

The general procedure adopted by our schools to deal with misconduct on the buses is as follows:

1.	First Offense:	A warning and/or punishment.
2.	Second Offense:	A letter to parents and/or punishment.
3.	Third Offense:	Not less than three days suspension from bus.
4.	Fourth Offense:	Not less than one week suspension from bus.
5.	Fifth Offense:	Suspension from bus for the remainder of the school year.

The bus privileges of a student may be suspended, of course, on a first or second offense when in the judgment of school officials the misconduct is serious enough to justify such action.

Each case of reported misconduct will be appropriately investigated before punishment is administered. The principal of the school in which the child is enrolled is responsible for the punishment.

Please feel free to come to the school or to telephone the Principal should you have any questions regarding the foregoing.

Sincerely yours,